EDVARDVS REYNOLDS S.T.P. EPISC. NORVIC. OBIIT IVL. 28 ANNO DOM. 1676. ÆTAT. SVÆ 76.
R White sculp.

EDVARDVS REYNOLDS S.T.P. EPISC. NORVIC. OBIIT IVL. 28 ANNO DOM. 1676. ÆTAT. SVÆ 76.
R White sculp.

Tab — 16 — 60 1.
8 20 11

Meditations
ON THE
FALL
AND
RISING
OF
St PETER.

By *Edward Reynolds*, late Lord Bishop of *Norwich.*

LONDON,
Printed for *Thomas Parkhurst*, at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns* in *Cheapside* near *Mercers-Chappel*, and at the *Bible* on *London-Bridg*, 1677.

De-

23.22.57

AN ADVERTISEMENT TO THE Reader.

Courteous Reader,

AS I cannot expect thy Thanks, so I need not fear thy Censure for the Publication of these Meditations. For by

the forwardneſs of the Book-ſeller to promote thine (I hope) as well as his own profit, they paſſed the Preſs altogether without my knowledg; and before I received the leaſt Intimation of any ſuch Deſign, they were by him preſented to me intirely Printed, deſiring my atteſtation of their Legitimacy. To prevent therefore thy doubt and ſuſpicion

tou-

touching their true Author, I do from good and manifold Evidences assure thee, they are the genuine, though early off-spring of that Reverend Person whose name is prefixed to them. In his Lordships life-time I have often heard him mention, not only in general this Tractate, as one of his First Theological Essays; *But likewise in particular, his Pre-*

Presenting thereof to a Pious and Charitable * *Gentlewoman, who by an holy emulation of her namesake* Joanna *in the Evangelist, did minister unto Christ of her Substance, by liberal Gifts to his Preachers and Poor. From this Copy fairly written with the Authors own hand, and prefaced with*

* Mrs. Nixon of Oxon.

with a short paper of Verses to that his Friend, were they Printed by the Stationer. And since the Decease of my Father, and his only Brother * *(both within the compass of two Months), two Copies of the same came into my Possession; amongst each of their Papers, one: Both the fruit*

* Mr. John Reynolds Rector of Blaby.

as

as of the Heart and Head, ſo of the Hand too of the Author, exactly agreeing together, as I found upon peruſal of them; and (as far as my Memory can aſſiſt me, abſent from my Study in comparing them) fully according with this Third, now made publick.

The firſt Liſping ſalutes of young Children,

and

and the last Gasping Farewells of dying friends, of all words, are wont to make most deep and lasting impressions upon us. That these short Meditations, some of the first Juvenile Breathings in Divinity of that devout Soul now with God, may obtain like effect, is the prayer of

Thy faithful Servant

London, March 13, 167⅚. *EDW. REYNOLDS.*

TO THE READER.

THis Reverend Author, of great renown for Piety and Learning, needs no Letters of Commendation: For as it was ſaid of righteous *Abel*, *That he being dead, yet ſpeaketh*, *Heb.* 11. 5. ſo this profound and pious Divine yet lives, and ſpeaks in his excellent Works; wherein he hath ſtudied (as the Apoſtle gave

gave in charge to *Timothy*) *to approve himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*, 2 Tim. 2. 15. Yet because many eminent Writers not only after they were dead, but even whilst they were alive, have been much abus'd and injur'd by surreptitious, or supposititious, at least by imperfect Copies of their Works; therefore I thought my self obliged (as being an ancient and intimate acquaintance of the worthy Author) to give this Testimony to the Truth,

Truth, *viz.* That these ensuing *Meditations concerning Saint Peters Fall and Rising*, are the genuine issue of the Head-labours, and Heart-labours of the Author, whose name they bear, and whose stile they resemble as face in water answers face,

——*Sic oculos, sic ille manus, sic ora ferebat.*

Neither do they only resemble his stile (which is much of an evidence to be his) but they are printed according to his own *Original Manuscript*. These *Meditations* were pen'd and sent (as

a New-years Gift) to one of his ancient Friends in *Oxford*, much about that time, when he wrote those two Learned Treatises, One *of the Passions and Faculties of the Soul of Man.* The other, *of Meditations of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.*

When he was Fellow of *Merton*-Colledg, *Oxon*, his pregnant Gifts and Graces shined forth even in his younger years. How well he hath improv'd his time not only in his elder years, but in his younger also,

alſo, his Learned Labours declare, publiſht for the great benefit of the Church of God. This conſideration deſerves ſuch a ſpecial remark of Honour to be fixt upon him, as to perpetuate his bleſſed memory to poſterity, and to remain for the living as a ſignal pattern worthy of imitation.

It's obſervable, that in his preaching and writing (as the Wiſeman chargeth) *Whatſoever his hands found to do, he did it with all his might*, Eccleſ. 9. 10. He was ſuch a Preacher as the ſame

Wiſeman mentions, *The Preacher ſought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, even words of truth*, Eccleſ. 12. 10. *David* ſaid to *Araunah*, when he would have given him freely Oxen for Burnt-Sacrifice, *I will ſurely buy it of thee at a price, neither will I offer Burnt-offerings unto the Lord my God which doth coſt me nothing*, 2 Sam. 24. 24. It's abundantly evident, that this eminent Preacher and Writer beſtowed

Verba deſiderii, Verba voluntatis, Verba veritatis.

ſtowed much pains and ſtudies in whatever he Preacht or Printed. His Works ſmell of the Lamp, and of indefatigable induſtry. I ſhall add no more concerning the Author, becauſe I cannot ſay enough of his deſerts: And the ſayings are vulgar, *Nemo vituperat Herculem. Ex pede Herculem.*

The Subject of theſe Meditations is *Peter's Fall and Riſing.* One thing is added in Saint *Mark*, which is not mention'd in the other three Evange-

lists: For it's said, *And when he thought thereon, he wept.* If we peruse the Original word, we shall find that he cast something over his head (as Mourners and Delinquents us'd to do when they were asham'd to be seen), and so *Theophylact* interprets the place. *Peter* denied shamefully, and therefore he wept bitterly. Great Sins will cost even God's dearest Children great and bitter sorrows.

Mark 14. 72. ἐπιβαλὼν ἔκλαιε τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐπικαλυψάμενος τὴν κεφαλὴν. Theoph.

rows. We might add more Inſtances of *David*, *Mary Magdalen*, *Paul*, &c. But this inſtance of *Peter* is a ſufficient evidence.

It's a ſaying of *Juſtin Martyr*, *That it's beſt of all not to ſin: and next, to amend upon the puniſhment.* But who of any underſtanding would therefore break his head, becauſe he hopes to have a good Medicine to cure it? The Uſes which we ought to make of this Inſtance of *Peter*, are menti-on'd by Saint *Paul*, *Thou ſtandeſt by Faith, be not*

high minded, but fear, Rom. 10. 20. *Wherefore let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall,* 1 Cor. 10. 12. What St. *Auſtine* ſaid of *David*, may be well applied particularly unto our ſelves, *Let ſuch* (ſaith he) *who have not fallen, hear, and take heed of falling: ſuch as have fallen, let them hear and riſe again. Here is not propounded an example of falling, but an example of riſing a-*

Audiant qui non ceciderunt ne cadant, qui ceciderunt ut ſurgant. Non cadendi exemplum proponitur, ſed ſi ceciderit, reſurgendi, Auguſt. in Pſalm 51.

gain

gain after falling.

This Treatiſe (though ſhort) is pithy and ſolid, and contains the quinteſſence of good invention, and ſound judgment, (which are the two parts of Logick.) It may be compar'd to an *Illiad* in a Nutſhell, or to a Map deſcribing in a little compaſs of paper, a large Country, which is contain'd in a few ſignificant words; and the Motto may be——

Pondere non numero.

The

To the Reader.

The ſame Renowned Author hath preacht many Excellent and Elaborate Sermons upon that Myſterious Prophecy of *Zachariah.* And likewiſe he hath preacht many profound Sermons upon ſeveral Caſes of Conſcience: Both which he hath unfolded with great dexterity of judgment; many whereof I my ſelf (with others far better able to judg) have heard him preach (about twenty and ſix years ſince) in *Oxford*, both to admiration and ſatisfaction.

It's

To the Reader.

It's much to be desir'd and hoped that it may be obtain'd for the publick good, that the Reverend and Learned Doctor his only surviving Son, who doth *Patrissare*, (to whom may be applied that of the Poet,——

Uno avulso, non deficit alter
Aureus, & simili frondescit Virga metallo.
Virg.)

Would be prevail'd withal to print those Elaborate Ser-

Sermons, which (queſtion-leſs) will much conduce to the publick good of the Church of God.

In the mean time let us be thankful unto God who hath given ſuch Gifts and Graces unto men, and let us make the beſt improvement of them whilſt we have them; and let us (according to our Saviours example) *Work the works of him that ſent us, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work*, Joh. 9. 4.

I ſhall not detain thee (Reader) any longer in a pre-

preliminary discourse from reading these choice Meditations. Thy profiting by them is as well desired for thee, as for him, who desires thy Prayers, and remains thy servant for Christs sake,

March 20. 167$\frac{6}{7}$. *H. W.*

TO

My Good Friend

Mrs. *NIXSON.*

THe Season is of Joy, the Gift of Tears:
This seems a discord unto common ears.
But he that makes the fiercest wolf to sleep,
And feed in friendship with the weakest sheep,
Unites remotest passions, and can bring
Waters of comfort from griefs bitter spring:
The Follyest Baltaser *on earth may borrow*
True Joy of him who seems o'rewhelm'd in sorrow.
Begin the Year, and pass it in these Tears,
They'l yield you joy against your greatest fears.
And kindly entertain your poor friends thrift.
A Renew'd Peter, *for a New-years-gift.*

Your true Friend,

E. R.

IMPRIMATUR

Hic liber, cui titulus (Meditations on the Fall, *&c.*)

G. Jane R. P. D. Hen. Epiſ. Lond. a Sacris Domeſt.

MEDITATIONS ON THE Fall and Rising OF PETER.

MEDITAT. I.

PRide and Preſumption have been ever, as well in the godly as in the wicked, the forerunners of a Fall. The firſt man, *Adam*, the

firſt Apoſtle, *Peter*, both fell by theſe. Had *Adam* given leſs ear to the proud perſwaſion of a weak Sex, and *Peter* to the preſumptions of a weak Confidence, the one had not plung'd his poſterity into a depth of wretchedneſs; nor both, themſelves into a depth of ſorrow. High conceits and reſolutions built on ſhallow ground, can promiſe nothing but ruin on the head of him that rais'd them.

MED.

MED. II.

WHat can we expect from *Peter* but a triple denial of his Masters person amongst his enemies, who dares even to his own face make a double denial of his Truth? He that will adventure to deny the truth of Christs Word, will quickly upon temptation deny the profession of his Truth. *You all* (saith Christ) *shall be offended because of me this night.* *Nay, Lord,* answers Peter, *though all, yet never*

I. Yes, Peter, *thou more than any: for this very night thou ſhalt thrice deny me.* O no Lord, I know mine own ſtrength, I am ſo confident of my love unto thee, that neither life nor death can ſeparate me from it. I have a ſword in my hand, and I have a ſword in my mouth; my Blade and my Profeſſion ſhall both follow thee unto death. *Peter* hath not yet learn'd, not to contradict his Maſter, though once he got nothing but a *Satan* for it. It is not one either rebuke or diſgrace, can root up

up the untowardneſs of a corrupt diſpoſition. Weak man! ſeeſt thou not how thou haſt already begun to deny thy Lord? and even then haſt enter'd upon a revolt, when thou ſeemeſt moſt fortified and conſtant in thy reſolution? That man denies him, who denies his Word, he being no longer Chriſt than he is true. Why then ſhouldeſt thou either diſtruſt thy Maſters word, which told thee, *that all ſhould be offended?* or elſe have any ſuch confident preſumption of thine own

ſtrength, or uncharitable conceit of thy fellows weakneſs, as to believe his prediction touching their falling, and yet think he was deceiv'd in thee, who art peremptory and confident of thine own ſtanding? That God which out of true weakneſs hath ordained ſtrength, doth here out of preſumed ſtrength foretel weakneſs; and as he can make the mouths of babes and ſucklings to confeſs him, ſo can he ſuffer the mouth of an Apoſtle, a *Peter*, to deny him. Shewing in both the de-

dependance as well of ſtrong as of weak on his Goodneſs: The ſtrongeſt Apoſtle being not able without his ſuſtaining-grace to confeſs him; and with it, the weakeſt infant in the ſtreet being enabled to cry *Hoſanna* unto him.

MED. III.

I Cannot be so uncharitable as not to believe, That it was *Peters* Faith and Love which made unto Christ this promise of perseverance in his profession: such fruit and sweetness had he found in those words of eternal life, such power in that Son of the living God, that he could not but think it blessedness to follow and enjoy his society even unto death, who was able to sweeten and sanctifie death it self. But be-

behold, in the ſame ſoul, nay in the ſame action, a mixture, I had almoſt ſaid a predominancy, of faith and fleſh! The deſire and the purpoſe come from faith, the confidence and reſolution came from fleſh. Self-dependance, pride, or any other carnal affection which is more deeply rooted in the particular nature of any man, do often intermix themſelves in his moſt holy actions. It was faith that made *Peter* go down upon the Water, but it was fleſh that made him begin to ſink: Faith made him zea-

zealous in Chriſts Cauſe, but fleſh drew his ſword at *Malchus* his ear: Faith made him follow Chriſt, but fleſh made him follow afar off: Faith made him accompany Chriſt to the garden, but fleſh made him ſleep when he ſhould have ſorrowed: Faith made him promiſe perſeverance, but fleſh made him peremptory in that promiſe: in a word, Faith made him reſolute to confeſs, but fleſh to contradict his Maſter. Vows and Promiſes unconditionally addreſſed, cannot but prove dangerous to the ſtron-

ſtrongeſt Faith. God muſt firſt give us perſeverance, before we can promiſe it; It is not in our power, though it be our duty to perform it. Though *Peter* may in the vertue of Chriſts promiſe be ſure not to fall into Hell, he cannot in the vertue of his own promiſe be ſure not to fall into temptation; though he can be ſecure that Faith ſhall have the laſt victory; yet he cannot that it ſhall have every victory: though it cannot die and be finally dried up, yet it may ebb, and languiſh; and though even

now

now it can look undauntedly on the nails of a Croſs, yet preſently it may be affrighted at the voice of a Maid. He only that hath given faith unto us, can give life and action unto our faith. Chriſt is both the quickner, and the object of our Faith, by whoſe power it worketh, and on whoſe merits it relyeth. When He therefore is pleas'd to remove and withdraw himſelf, Faith muſt needs be there unoperative, where both its Object and its Mover is abſent. As we cannot ſee the Sun but by the light

light of the Sun, ſo neither can we believe in Chriſt but by the Grace of Chriſt. Who can wonder that the outward parts of the body ſhould be benum'd and ſtupid, when the ſpirits and animal vertues which ſhould enliven them, have retir'd themſelves? Lord! let me never barely promiſe, but let me withal pray unto thee; and let ever my purpoſe to die for thee, be ſeconded with a ſupplication that I may not deny thee; whenever I have an arm of confidence to lift up in defence of thy Truth, let me have a knee

of

of humility to bow down before thy Throne : Lord, give me what I may promiſe, and I will promiſe what thou requireſt.

M E D.

MED. IV.

WEre not the other Diſciples taught from the ſame holy mouth? did they not with the ſame holy faith receive what they had been taught? Why then ſhould *Peter* give credit to the word of Chriſt ſo far as concern'd their weakneſs, and yet diſtruſt it in the preſumption of his own ſtrength? What though he be the chief in following his Maſter, may he not as well be the chief in falling from him? I never

ver knew a priority of Order priviledg'd with a precedence of Grace. Yet such is the nature of Greatness, that it conceits it self secure from danger, and apprehends spiritual immunity in temporal honour. How erroneous is the frailty of mans nature! How ready to trust upon an arm of flesh, confidence, free-will, supremacy, even against divine predictions of danger, and thinks it self sufficiently arm'd with that, than which there is no greater cause of its weakness and ruin!

MED.

MED. V.

ONE would have thought that *Peter* upon the noiſe of a denial, ſhould have begun to tremble, and not to boaſt; to arm, and not to preſume; to ſuſpect his ſtrength, and not promiſe it: But that a double warning ſhould find a double preſumption, would make a man confident to expect an invincible reſolution; and believe that even naked and empty nature, being ſo deeply engaged, would have, if not cou-

rage, yet ſhame enough to perſiſt in ſuch a purpoſe, which being broken, could not but infer the diſcredit not only of a weak, but of an inconſtant ſpirit; more faithleſs in the execution of a promiſe, more impotent in its contempt of death, than could well ſtand with the honeſty or courage of a *Peter*. But it is the juſtice of God to give over nature to faintings and falls, when it relyes upon it ſelf; and to make him fear the leaſt aſſault, who hath not arm'd himſelf with that which

ſhould

ſhould defend him againſt the greateſt. One tear or ſigh, though emblems of weakneſs, could more have prevailed to ſtrengthen *Peter*'s Faith, than ſo many fruitleſs boaſts, the gildings and flouriſhings of a rotten confidence. A little Pebleſtone will overturn and ſink down a *Goliah*, when all the Armor of *Saul* will rather cumber than profit in ſuch a conflict.

MED. VI.

GReat Promiſes require great cares; and he who hath deeply engag'd himſelf in any ſervice, muſt needs be either very vigilant, or very faithleſs. How is it then that after ſo many promiſes I find *Peter* ſleeping even then when his Maſter is ſweating? and that that Garden ſhould be the bed of ſo ſecure a reſt, which was the Theater of ſo exquiſite and unimitable an anguiſh? Can he follow Chriſt a whole night to his

his Judgment, that cannot watch one hour for his comfort? can he command his life to be laid down for Christs Truth, that cannot command his eyes to be the witnesses of his sorrow? so long as we are out of the view of danger, we can make large promises of our strength to bear it; but when once it draws near, and creeps upon us, we begin to look with another colour both on it and our selves, and become either desperately fearful, or supinely stupid. Like untoward and for-

getful children, which never fear the Rod till they feel it.

MED.

MED. VII.

I Cannot wonder that *Peter* ſhould fall off, being tempted, who is already, though unqueſtion'd, ſo far behind; that he ſhould tremble at the terror of Death, who cannot endure the trouble of a Watch. He muſt learn more to deny himſelf, before he can take up his Croſs. The nights of a reſolved Martyr, muſt be ſpent in the ſtudies of patience, not in ſecurity and eaſe; he muſt firſt be a perſecutor of him-

ſelf, and exerciſe a holy cruelty on his own fleſh, by crucifying the luſts thereof, before he can be able to overcome the wit, and moſt exquiſite inventions of his tormentors, in a holy and undaunted patience. The Soul muſt be firſt rais'd unto Heaven, before the body can be willing to go down into the earth. Had *Peter* watch'd and accompanied his Maſter, he might have receiv'd further encouragement in his reſolution to die for him, and learn'd from the extremity of his anguiſh, if not to hate life,

life, which could make a man subject to such expressless sorrow; yet at least willingly to embrace the present opportunity of glorifying God by a constant death; even for this respect, that thereby he might be freed from the capacity and danger of those afflictions, which he should there have seen flesh and blood lyable unto. Of how many precious occasions of good does the too great love of our flesh and ease deprive us? Every man would love God more, if he could be more out of love with himself. *MED.*

MED. VIII.

I Cannot expect other, but that he ſhould follow Chriſt afar off, who goes ſleepily after him; nor can I hope for courage from his tongue, whoſe feet begin ſo ſoon to play the Cowards. It is not likely that he will come near Chriſt in *Golgotha*, that follows him afar off in the Judgment-hall: if he be unwilling to ſeem his, he will be quickly ready to deny him. Behold the be-

beginnings of *Peter*'s backſliding in his very following of Chriſt! To follow him indeed is a work of Faith; but to follow afar off, is nothing elſe but by little and little to go back from him. See how the preparations unto *Peter*'s fall ſecond each other. After ſleeping, he follows afar off; and from that, he comes to ſitting ſtill; and that not in private to pray or repent, but in publick to warm himſelf at that fire, where his Conſcience, though not ſeared, was yet made more hard. He which

pre-

prefers the heat of a fire, compaſſed in with the blaſphemies of wicked men (the neareſt pattern that can be of Hell) to the ſweet ſociety of his Saviour, with the diſcommodity of a cold air, and an enſuing Judgment, cannot be far from denying of him. That man whom the enjoying of any temporal benefit, or the opportunity of any ſenſual and worldly delight, can induce to forſake the company of Chriſt, (who is ever preſent in his Ordinances) is at the next door

door (if occaſion were given) to Apoſtacy and backſliding.

MED.

MED. IX.

THE Devil hath a kind of method and colour of modeſty in his Temptations. He knew that it would not ſort with the Holineſs of *Peter*, to ſhoot at the firſt a fiery dart towards him, and tempt him in the very beginning of his onſet, unto a perjur'd and blaſphemous denial of his Maſter. *Peter* would have at the firſt trembled at ſo fearful a ſuggeſtion. And there-

therefore, like a cunning Captain, he ſo ranks and muſters up his forces, as that the firſt Temptation ſhall like weaker Soldiers make way for the latter, which are the old experienced and ſturdy fighters; the former ſerve only to weaken *Peter*, the latter to overthrow him. At the firſt the Devil tempts us to ſmall ſins, to remit ſomething of our wonted vigor, to indulge a little unto our corrupt deſires, to unbend our thoughts, and to ſlacken our pace in proſecution of good courſes, that by

by cooling our ſelves we may be able to hold out the better; but when he hath drawn us thus far, he hath gotten the advantage of us; and having a door open, lets in his more ugly and horrid Temptations. Sin hath its ſeveral ages and growths; firſt, it is but conceiv'd and ſhap'd in the womb of Concupiſcence; then it is nouriſhed and given ſuck by the embraces and delights of the Will, as of a Nurſe; then laſtly, it grows into a ſtrong man, and doth of it ſelf run up and down our little

little World, invade all the faculties of Soul and Body, which are at last made the instruments of Satan to act and fulfill it. Satan at the first leads us downward towards Hell, as it were, by steps and stairs, which though they go lower and lower, yet we seem still to have firm footing, and to be able to go back at pleasure: But at last we find, as the way more and more slippery, so the enemy ready at hand to push us down into a dungeon of unrecoverable misery, did not Gods mercy

pluck us as a brand out of the fire. *Peter* firſt ſleeps only, that ſeemed the exigence of his nature; then he followed afar off, that haply was pretended to be only the drowſineſs of his ſleeping; then he ſits down at the fire, and that was but the coldneſs of the air: But then comes denying, ſwearing, curſing; and had not Chriſt in time looked back upon him, the next ſtep and regreſs, would have reach'd unto the jaws of Hell. But it was the great Wiſdom and Mercy of Chriſt

to

to honour the eſtate of his ignominy and reproach, his death and judgment, with two of his greateſt Miracles, The aſſuming of a repentant Thief, and the re-aſſuming of a revolted Diſciple.

MED. X.

IT is no wonder if *Peter* be tempted to forſake his Maſter, when he is far off from him. How can he chuſe but ſtumble and fall, who hideth himſelf from the Sun of Righteouſneſs, who is abſent from the Light of the World, who wanders out of the way of Life, who is beyond the voice of that word of Truth which only ſuccoreth, directeth, leadeth, inſtructeth in Holineſs and Secu-

Security ? He which teſtifieth his Faith by following, and yet lays open his fleſh and weakneſs by following afar off, ſhall be ſure to meet with ſuch an enemy as hates our Faith, and therefore takes advantage by our weakneſs to oppoſe it. Our Faith provokes him to enmity, for he is adverſary to none ſo much as thoſe that are out of his power; and our weakneſs invites him to an aſſault, for he trembles and flies from oppoſition. Had *Peter* abode in the company of his Lord, Satan

would not have dar'd to tempt him unto a Triple-denial in the preſence of ſuch a power, whence he had formerly received ſuch a Triple-overthrow, having been himſelf broken with thoſe ſtones, and hurled down from that Pinacle and Mountain, in which he thought to have batter'd and broken in pieces the Salvation of the World by the overthrow of its Saviour. Or if perhaps he would have been ſo impudent, or ſo venturous, as to thruſt into the preſence of

of his Maker, and before him to iſſue forth his Temptations; yet this advantage ſhould *Peter* have had, that he ſhould have been directed with more light, and aſſiſted with greater ſtrength to reſiſt ſo impudent an aſſault; his Faith haply ſhould bave been confirmed, though his adverſaries malice had not been abated. And we know the Devil never overcomes any, that is not firſt overcome of himſelf. What danger is there in fighting, where, there is no danger of falling? or what difference

is there between an unoppos'd ſecurity, and an aſſaulted ſtrength, ſave that this is more glorious, the other no whit the more ſafe? He is not far from Satans temptations, who belonging to Chriſt, is yet far off from his preſence and aſſiſtance. None nearer the fury of a ſtrong and bloody malice, than a weak and ſtragling enemy.

M E D.

MED. XI.

I Never read of more dangerous falls in the Saints, than were *Adams*, *Lots*, *Sampſons*, *Davids*, *Solomons* and *Peters*; and behold in all theſe, either the firſt Inticers, or the firſt Occaſioners are Women. A weak Creature may be a ſtrong Tempter; nothing too impotent or uſeleſs for the Devils ſervice. We know it is the pride of Satan to imitate God; As God magnifies his power

power in bringing ſtrength out of weakneſs, ſo doth the Devil labour to gain the glory of a ſtrong enemy, by the ruinating of a great Saint with the Temptation of a weak Sex. Nor is he herein more apiſh than cunning: for the end of the Devils conflicts is the deſpair of his enemy. He gets *Judas* to betray his Maſter, that he may after get him to hang himſelf. And he hath the ſame end in *Peter*'s Denial, which he had in *Judas* his Treaſon. Now what is there that can more draw a man to Deſpair,

than

than an apprehenſion of greatneſs in his ſin? and what fall greater, than to be foiled by a Queſtion by a Maid? What could more aggravate *Peter*'s ſin, than that the voice of a Maid ſhould be ſtronger to overcome him, than the Faith in a Jeſus to ſuſtain him? The Devil tempts us, that he may draw us unto ſin; but he tempts us by weak Inſtruments, that he may draw us unto deſpair.

MED.

MED. XII.

WOman was the firſt Sinner; and behold in the two greateſt falls, and moſt immediate denials of God, *Adam*'s, and *Peter*'s, Woman is made the firſt Tempter. So much as any one is the Devils ſlave to ſerve him, ſo much is he his Inſtrument to aſſiſt ſin. A Sinner will be preſently a Tempter.

MED.

MED. XIII.

Peter hath no ſooner denied his Maſter, but he goes out farther from him. See what a concord there is between our Members in ſinning! how the action of the Foot bears witneſs to the apoſtacy of the Tongue! But why ſhould *Peter* get him out for fear of an Attachment, and farther Examination, having already by his denial clear'd himſelf, and (for ought he ſees) ſatisfied

tisfied his adversary? Surely there is no security to be expected from the denial of our Lord. He which thinks to gain ease by sinning, missteth of his end, and shall be more afraid after he hath clear'd himself by Apostacy, than he was before. 'Tis not the way to avoid the storms of danger, by making shipwrack of a good Conscience; and to free our selves from the hands of men, by running upon the wrath of God. He which hides himself in the hedg of wickedness from danger, shall

ſhall meet with a Serpent inſtead of ſafety; and ſhall be ſo much the more ſuſpicious of other mens fury and perſecution, by how much the more he is ſenſible that he hath deſerv'd it. *Peter* ſate boldly amongſt them while he was in danger; he hath no ſooner made his Apology, but he is gone ſtraight. The ſame that befell *Peter* here in denying his dependance on his Saviour, did once befall *Adam* in denying the Truth of his Maker; the next news which you hear of them, is

their

their flight, their fear. Sin is ever deceitful, and pays nothing leſs than what it promiſeth. The firſt thing that ever painted it ſelf, was Sin.

MED.

MED. XIV.

IS the nature of Woman more inquiſitive, or more malignant, that amongſt ſo many other ſervants, a Woman ſhould begin the ſecond accuſation? The Devil will double a weak Temptation, if it have proved proſperous; and looks rather to the iſſue, than to the Inſtruments of his aſſaults. The firſt Maid tempted *Peter* by queſtioning him; this ſecond by accuſing him to the other Ser-

vants: from which latter we may infer, That those who are apteſt to Tempt, are apteſt to Accuſe. Theſe two are the Devils grand Inſtruments to work the ruin of Mankind. He firſt tempts a man to ſin, and then he accuſeth him to God. And therefore he hath both names in an equal propriety, a *Tempter*, and an *Accuſer*, and theſe on all ſides. He firſt tempted man to forſake his Maker, and accuſed his Maker of deceiving man; next he tempts God to Judgment upon man, by accuſing

fing man of wickedneſs towards God: and laſtly, after he hath tempted any man unto ſin, he begins to accuſe him to his brethren without, and his own Conſcience within. Ever when thou feeleſt an aſſault, begin to fear an accuſation; and learn to prevent the Devils Malice, by reſiſting his Temptation.

MED. XV.

WE may here see the method of Satan. His first Temptation is by one only Maid, his second by many Servants that stood by. The more weak and naked he finds us, with the greater force he makes upon us; using his first assault to try, but his second to wound us: As in the battery or breaking open of a City, one man may serve for a spie to watch the Gates, to take notice of the De-

Defences, and to make relation of the weakneſſes or force of either; but when they are by his report found unable for reſiſtance, there then follows the irruption of a whole army, bringing nothing but the threats of blood and ſlaughter: So is it with Satan towards our Souls; after he hath ſent one ſmaller Temptation as a ſpie to obſerve our Fortifications, and upon the ſucceſs and report of it, finds how weak we are to withſtand his forces, he then ruſhes in upon us with a multitude of his arm-

ed and more able ſervants; who certainly would take poſſeſſion of us, and hold us in peace as their own, did not a ſtronger than he come upon him, and overcome him, and divide the ſpoils.

MED.

MED. XVI.

THE form and manner of *Peter*'s ſecond Denial, is (not without ſpecial reaſon as I conceive) diverſly related. In one Evangeliſt the words are, *I know not the man*; in another, *I am not of them*. One would think theſe were two Denials. May not a man know him, unleſs he follow him? No. Behold a myſtery of Faith in the fall of *Peter*. No

man knows Christ unless he be one of them that follow him, and to whom he hath united himself. If it had been true, *I am not one of them*, it had been true also, *I know not the man.* All knowledg consists in mixture and union, whereby the understanding receiveth into it the image and similitude of the thing which it knows; which made the Philosopher say, That the Soul in understanding a thing is made the very thing which it understands; namely, in that sense as we call the Image of the Face

Face in a Glaſs, the Face it ſelf; or the Impreſſion in Wax, the Seal it ſelf. Now then there is no union between Chriſt and us, no dwelling of him in us, no ingrafture, or incorporation of us into him, without that Faith whereby we follow him, which makes us to be ſo nearly one with him, that (in the judgment of the learned) the name of Chriſt is ſometimes in the holy Scriptures taken for the Church of Chriſt. And therefore to thoſe that *believe*, to them only he hath given to

know.

know. Chriſt is not truly apprehended either by the fancy or the underſtanding. He is at once known and poſſeſs'd. It is an Experimental, and not a Speculative knowledg that conceives him: He underſtands him, that feels him. We ſee him in his Grace and Truth, in his Word and Promiſes, not in any carnal or groſs preſence. *Pilate* knew him in that manner, and *Judas*, as well as *Peter*. A true Believer can ſee and know him better in Heaven at the right hand of his Father, by a Sacramental,

than

than a *Papiſt* can on the Altar, in the *Jewiſh* and *Pilate*-hands of a Maſs-Prieſt, by a Tranſubſtantiated bread. Let their Faith have the aſſiſtance of teeth and jaws; ours, though toothleſs, eats him with leſs injury, and with more nouriſhment.

MED. XVII.

THE encreaſe of the Enemies Temptation, accumulates unto the Apoſtles ſin. When *Peter* is preſſed a ſecond time, and with more ſtrong oppoſition, he conceives a naked and empty denial, to be an implicite confeſſion; and therefore that he may make them more credulous, he makes himſelf more impious; and to gain Faith with men, he not only denies, but forſwears his Faith

Faith with God, making Chriſt himſelf the Witneſs and Patron not only of a Lie, but alſo of a Revolt. With how deep a die of ſin, with how many degrees of corruption, will the habit of Faith conſiſt! That failed not *Peter*, though the exerciſe thereof were a while ſmuther'd and ſuſpended. Chriſt's prayer was ſtronger to preſerve it, than his denial to root it out. That very action, which if it had proceeded from a heart qualified with other diſpoſitions of ſtubborneſs, malice, and

and obduration, would have been the irremediable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; was in *Peter*, proceeding from fear and weakneſs, the ſin of a believing and faithful heart. How may the Godly in this one Example both learn to deſpair of their own ſtrength, which cannot without Chriſt's aſſiſtance uphold them from ſo deep a fall; and not to deſpair of his mercy, which can keep Faith in a corner of that very heart, which lies drench'd and weltering in its own blood; and can raiſe up unto

to Martyrdom a man that had ſo deeply plung'd himſelf into Apoſtacy! He that ſuffer'd *Judas* to be the horrid ſubject of his Judgment, rais'd *Peter* from a ſin (I verily think) in it ſelf as great, to be the Preacher and Witneſs of his Mercy.

MED.

MED. XVIII.

HOW leprous and ſpreading is ſin? how weak and impotent is nature? how unſatisfiable and importunate is the Devil and his Inſtruments? A double temptation is not enough on Satans part, after a double denial; nor is a double denial on *Peter's* part enough confirm'd by a ſingle perjury. The Devil goes farther in Tempting, the poor Diſciple goes farther in Denying:

ing: The truth whereof, that he may the more eaſily enforce it, he confirms, according to the Law, by two, but thoſe wicked Witneſſes; and to a ſecond Oath is there join'd an Execration. An Execration ſtrong and deep enough to make *Peter* no lyar, though an Apoſtate; I mean to verifie the truth of his denial, and to make him indeed none of thoſe who alone knew their Saviour For it was (if the word retain here the ſame force which it doth in St. *Paul's* Epiſtle to the *Ro-*

mans) a curſe greater than any curſe, even an *Anathema*, a wiſh of eternal ſeparation from the preſence of God. It is no wonder if he dare deny Chriſt in earth, and in diſhonour, who can adventure to wiſh an eternal abſence from him in Heaven in his Glory. I never remember any *Anathema* that proceeded not from Love and Fear; That of *Moſes* and *Paul* from love of the ſafety, and fear of the deſtruction of their Brethren; that of *Peter*, from a love of himſelf, and a fear of

of death. How ſtrong and violent are Paſſions, whether holy or natural, when once truly apprehenſive of their object? How ſecure and negligent can they make *Peter* of his eternal eſtate, to avoid perhaps but the diſpleaſure of a mortal man? It is the miſery and error of corrupt nature, to ſhelter it ſelf againſt danger under ſin, and to think it ſelf ſufficiently ſafe, when it is violently wicked.

MED. XIX.

HE hath not only deſerv'd a Curſe, but provok'd it, that hath prayed for it; who could but expect the Execution after the Petition? But behold the mercy of a provoked God! Though *Peter* have asked a ſtone, a corner-ſtone to fall upon him, and grind him to powder, yet he giveth him inſtead

stead thereof, the bread of Eternal Life, the wine of repentant tears: Though he crave a Serpent, a fiery Serpent to sting him for ever unto death, yet he like a compassionate Saviour gives him the voice of a Cock, the sight of a brazen Serpent to recover his wounds. *Peter* hath provided a whole load of sins for Christ to carry to his approaching Cross; and Christ hath thrown on him such a burden of Mercies, as shall sink him deeper in the waters of Repen-

tance and admiration, than he was before in danger.

MED.

MED. XX.

ONE would think, that such a great recovery should be effected by the hand of some glorious Ministry, by the voice of an Angel or a Prophet. But see a Miracle in weakness! A Cock is made, as it were, a *John Baptist*, to forerun the look of Christ, and to preach Repentance. That God which can in power work without means, does in wisdom make use of the basest,

and can open the mouth of a beaſt for the converſion of a man. How careful ought we to be in the uſe of Means, when God ſeldom worketh without them? How humble in the uſe of Prayer, when the Means work not without God? The ordinary courſes of nature, the moſt accidental occurrences in the World, are ſanctified unto the good of the Elect, and are the Inſtruments of God for their Salvation.

MED.

MED. XXI.

BUT why ſhould our Saviour in this great work chuſe the ſervice of a Cock for the miniſtry of Repentance? There is ever ſome myſtery in Chriſt's Inſtruments. If he will give ſight to a blind man by impotent and unlikely means, they ſhall be a mixture

ture of ſomething out of his own mouth, with ſomething out of the Earth, to ſhew that the vertue of Chriſt's mouth in the earthy and clayie Veſſels of mortal men, is of force to open the eyes of the ignorant and impenitent. Chriſt in this Crow of the Cock hath given *Peter* as well an Example to follow, as an Occaſion to repent; as well taught him in the execution of his Apoſtleſhip, as converted him from the eſtate of a backſlider. A true Miniſter that loves Chriſt

Chriſt and his Sheep, muſt have the Wings of a Cock to rouze up firſt himſelf from ſecurity; and then being converted, powerfully to awaken and ſtrengthen others: and the Watchfulneſs of a Cock, to be ever ready to diſcover and forewarn danger; and the Voice of a Cock, to cry aloud, and tell *Iſrael* of their ſins, and terrifie the roaring Lion that ſeeks to devour them: and laſtly, the Hours of a Cock, to preach in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon,

ſon the glad tydings of Salvation.

MED.

MED. XXII.

WHO would think that a weak Cock ſhould be able to do more with *Peter*, than Prophets and Apoſtles with other men? That the noiſe of a Cock's Crow ſhould be heard ſo deep as the confines of Hell? Surely no man, if theſe weak means were not quickned and ſeconded with the look of Chriſt. He firſt turns and looks back in mercy upon *Peter*, before *Peter* can re-

turn

turn in ſorrow and repentance unto him. By him live, and move, and have their being, as well Chriſtians as Creatures. The very Faithful themſelves would lie ſtill in that depth of ſin whereinto they have been plunged, if that Power which in wiſdom ſuffers them to fall in, ſhould not in grace and pity raiſe them up. *Peter* cannot remember the word of his Maſter, till Chriſt remember the miſery of his Diſciple.

MED.

MED. XXIII.

SEE here the greatness of Christs Grace! one would think that he should have been wholly taken up with the dishonour of his present condition, with the sense of his Father's Desertion, with the foresight of his approaching sufferings. And yet behold, when he is wholly possess'd of weakness, he is yet at leisure for

a

a work of power. The righteous Juſtice of his God, and the unjuſt cruelty of his enemies, were not able to drive him from the remembrance or exerciſe of his mercy. He that came to ſuffer all theſe things for man, does in the midſt of his ſufferings remember man, honouring the ſcorns and buffets of his Judgment, with the Converſion of a faln Apoſtle; and the Nails and Ignominies of his Croſs, with the Converſion of a reviling Thief.

MED.

MED. XXIV.

AND now methinks I see in the face of Christ, a throng and a conflict of Affections. One while I see an angry and upbraiding face against *Peter*'s revolt; another while a pitiful face, commiserating his frailty; then a merciful face, converting him; and next a gracious and favourable face, inviting him. If it were a face of Anger, see then the nature of Faith in *Peter* and all

the Godly, which through the clouds of his diſpleaſure can diſcover the comfortable light and beams of a Saviour, as well as through his vail of fleſh and diſhonour, diſcern the Power and Majeſty of God, like the Woman in the Goſpel, whoſe Faith could interpret the very odious name of Dog, uttered from the mouth of Chriſt, to be a trial of her, and not a rejection; rather a hiding than a denying of mercy. If it were a face of Grace and Invitation, ſee the nature of ſin, which is

to

to make a man afraid even of an appeased God; and of Repentance, which when the Soul is invited to the rivers of joy which make glad Gods City, can be at leisure to drink of those bitter tears, which make heavy the hearts of sinners. If it were a pitiful and commiserating face, see how it works alike Qualities in *Peter*, who then only can begin to lament himself, when he is first lamented by his Saviour. Lord! never let thy saving face be turned back from me, but be thou always pleased to

look upon me, whether in tender diſpleaſure, or in a pitiful mercy; that ſo I may be driven by ſorrow out of my ſelf, and by faith unto thee.

MED.

MED. XXV.

THE firſt beginning of *Peter*'s Repentance, is a Remembrance of the words of Chriſt, an applicative and feeling recordation of them. How powerful is Temptation to baniſh out of mans mind all conceit of Gods Truth, or his own danger! He that is too mindful of his ſafety, will be too unmindful of his Faith. A ſanctified Memory, whether in retaining of Divine Truth, or in

preſenting our own ſins, is an excellent preparative to Repentance; and like a ſteddy wind, doth collect and draw together thoſe clouds, whence ſhall after iſſue forth thoſe happy tears.

M E D

MED. XXVI.

BUT what was it that *Peter* remembred? It is not said, *Peter* now consider'd how he stood naked and open to the flames of Hell, or how he had expos'd himself to the scourges of an inward Tormentor, to the scorchings of a bosom-hell, his Conscience, or to the fearful judgment and revenge of him whom he had injur'd by denying; and therefore he went out and

wept: It was fear that made him fall, it made him not repent: But it was only the merciful prediction of Christ which he remember'd; what slight esteem he had made of that gracious caution which should have arm'd him against Temptations: and this made him go out and weep. The abuse of Gods mercy, the grieving of Gods Spirit, the undervaluing of Gods Truth, more wounds the Soul of a repentant sinner, than all the gripes of Conscience, or flames of Hell.

MED.

MED. XXVII.

BUT what makes thee (O bleſſed Convert) thus to ſtart and turn upon the Look of thy Lord, and the remembrance of thy ſin, as if the repentance for the denial of thy Tongue, had made thy Foot again to deny thy Maſter? Whither runneſt thou, *Peter*, from ſuch a fountain of Mercy? Haſt thou either miſtaken the Look of thy Saviour, which was to draw and reunite thee

thee unto him, not to drive or baniſh thee from him? or hath thy ſorrow drown'd thy Faith, and made thee forget that glorious profeſſion which thou once didſt make out of a happy knowledg of experience and belief that Chriſt had the words of Eternal Life? and whither then goeſt thou? Haſt thou forgotten that he had balm to cure thy grief, and blood to blot out thy ſin? that he could at once both comfort and reſtore thee, and render unto thee thy former joy and grace? Why

Why didſt thou not run into his embraces, and in token of thy repentance and belief, in thy body lay hold upon him, and waſh him with thy tears againſt his Burial? But behold the myſtery of *Peter*'s recover'd Faith! ſee how he acknowledgeth his Saviour when he turneth from him; and is reinveſted with the honour of a Diſciple, though he ſeem ſtill rather to forſake, than to follow his Lord. His Repentance doth in action confirm, what his Faith once did in words confeſs, That Chriſt

Chriſt was the Son of the Living God. Behold in the departure of *Peter*, an Article of thy Faith, even the Divinity of thy Saviour. Had not Chriſt been as well without, where *Peter* wept, as within the Hall where the *Jews* blaſphemed, *Peter* had again denied, and not return'd unto his Lord: and that which is now a myſtery, would have been a revolt. It is nothing but Faith that from without could ſtill through the Walls look into the Houſe, and there through the infirmity of a buf-

buffetted and contemned body, deſcry the glory of a merciful and reconciled God. It is nothing but Faith that can from Earth look into the higheſt Heaven; and when it is abſent from Chriſt, not only groan after him, but graſp and lay hold upon him. The Ubiquity of Chriſt gives unto that Believer who hath intereſt in him, a kind of Ubiquity alſo: And as he is in Earth by his Power, though in Heaven by his Preſence: So a Believer, though in his Body on the Earth, yet is in Heaven by his

his Faith. It is the nature of Faith to give, as ſubſiſtence and being unto things yet to come, ſo a kind of preſence alſo unto things moſt remote and diſtant; and can even converſe, and lay hold on Chriſt, though he be in Heaven.

MED. XXVIII.

BUT what, *Peter!* though thou canſt find thy Saviour without the Hall, is there no comfort to be taken in his ſenſible Preſence? doth the poſſeſſion of Faith make vain and fruitleſs the fruition of ſight? Is it not ſome joy to ſee him, becauſe it is ſo much Bleſſedneſs to believe in him? Was there health in his Garment, and is there no pleaſure in his Preſence? Was the Womb bleſſed

bleſſed that held him, and is there not ſome bleſſedneſs in the eyes that ſee, and the hands that embrace him? Was it from Temptation, which had before foiled thee, that thou didſt fly as a burnt Child from the fire? Was the voice of a Virgin able to drive thee from the Son of a Virgin; or the Challenge of a Servant, from the preſence of a Lord? Was not that Look able to confirm thee, which was able to convert thee? Or couldſt thou fear to fall from the Rock, thy Saviour,

our, becauſe thou hadſt before faln from the Sand, thy Preſumption? Or was it out of a loathing of that place of blaſphemy where thy Maſter and thy God did ſuffer the baſe reproaches of wicked men? could the air of that place be infectious, where was ſo precious, ſo innocent, ſo ſaving a breath to ſweeten it? Was the blaſphemy of a *Jew* more peſtilent to pollute, than the Grace of thy Jeſus to ſanctifie the High-Prieſts Hall? The preſence of Chriſt could make that place

a Heaven to *Peter*, which the blaſphemies of a *Jew* had made his Hell. It was neither the vileneſs of the place, nor the queſtion of a Servant which could have done thee any violence. They might tempt, they could not wound thee. A Mountain ſtands unmov'd though the Winds be impetuous, when a ſmaller breath not only ſhakes but breaks down a reed. If thy Lord have given thee ſtrength, thy Adverſary cannot give thee a fall: If he beckon on thee to turn, thou

thou art by his finger ſufficiently arm'd againſt a Torment, a Devil, much more againſt a Temptation, a Maid. But ſuch is the recovery of Faith, as of Health, it proceeds by degrees, from weakneſs unto ſtrength, from fear unto confidence, and dares not truſt in Chriſt without ſome trembling. *Peter* is aſſured of his Maſter's love, and yet he is aſhamed of his own ſin. Shame is ever ſins companion. He durſt not to look that Maſter in the face, whom ſo lately he had denied: He could with the

Publican knock his breaſt, he could not look up to Heaven, to the face of his Maſter; he could pray unto Chriſt, he could not accompany him. And as the modeſty of nature makes a man able to deliver more of his mind in abſence than in preſence: ſo the ſhame of ſin makes *Peter* more confident without, than within the Hall.

MED. XXIX.

WE find not that *Peter* after this, ſaw Chriſt till his Reſurrection: And then none ſo particularly invited unto his ſight, none ſo forward and haſty to have recourſe unto the Garden. Was it grief at his Maſter's miſery, or at his own ſin (with the lamentation of both which, he could beſt in private glut himſelf)? or was it fear of the Majeſty in his Maſter's face, or of weak-

neſs in his own breaſt, which drave him out of the Hall to weep? ſurely perhaps all. He departed from the face of his Lord, from the company of his Tempters, provoked thereunto by the ſhame of his Fall, by the experience of his frailty: He departed from the committing of more ſin, from the ſight of more miſery, becauſe he knew not whether he ſhould find more mercy, or be able to bear more ſorrow. But when once Chriſt through the power of his Reſurrection, had

had cloth'd himself with Glory, and *Peter* by the Angels message was uncloth'd of fear, none more hasty to enjoy the benefit of his real Presence. He ran, and went down into the Sepulcher, not hoping to see there a weak and captive body, but (as he did) a conquer'd and deceived grave; only the relicks of weakness, and the witnesses of power. What haste, think we, made he to rise up unto his Saviour's Kingdom, that was so ready to go down into his

grave ? when Nature is rais'd up from her ruins and decays, when the Conſcience is cleans'd from the guilt of ſin, or burden of ſorrow, when a lapſed Saint hath regain'd his meaſure of Grace and Tranquility, he is ſo much the more ſpeedy in Heavenly purſuits, by how much his former fall had been a diſadvantage to his progreſs: and thoſe ſharp ſins which, being acted, did wound him, do now, being remembred, only ſpur him forward in his way. The very ſins of the Godly,

con-

contrary to the barrenneſs of their own nature (which bringeth forth nothing but death), are by the Mercy and Wiſdom of God, made fruitful and of uſe unto them. The Devil in wounding them, wounds himſelf; and though his fiery darts may perhaps at firſt find entrance; yet when they come to the bottom of a faithful heart, they meet there with a Rock of Salvation, from whence they are driven back into the face of him that threw them. When the Devil batters any one

Vertue

Vertue in a Saint, he does in the iſſue nothing elſe but pluck out the ſtones of his own building. Though he breaks *David*'s bones, though he ſift and winnow *Peter*'s Faith; yet both, when they are reſtor'd, will be like a broken bone, ſtronger; and like Wheat ſifted, finer; and will alſo by inſtructing and confirming of others; draw more men from him, than he before had done Graces from them.

MED.

MED. XXX.

PEter had expected great ſecurity in the Denial of his Saviour; and behold the iſſue and upſhot of all, *He wept birterly.* Now are his eyes turned, as it were, into a Valley of *Megiddo*, his head into a fountain of water, and his ſoul is even drench'd in whole floods of ſorrow. Sin is not only deceitful in depriving us of thoſe hoped Immunities which we ſeek for in it, but fruit-

fruitful likewiſe in an ample encreaſe of evil. It not only depriveth us of comfort, but heapeth unto our miſery. Like a great thick cloud, which not only interpoſeth between the Sun of Righteouſneſs and us, hiding the light of his Countenance from us, but withal alſo ſhowres down on our deceived Souls whole ſtorms of wo and ſhame. There is ever a Weeping follows Sin. Either ſuch a deſperate weeping as hath that dreadful Concomitant added unto it, Gnaſhing of teeth, or ſuch a Repen-

Repentant weeping as is ſealed up from the mouth of Chriſt himſelf with a Bleſſing until the day of Redemption. And bleſſed indeed are the tears of a converted revolter; and happy is this very miſery of a mourning offender; for as water boiling and running over, puts out that fire which firſt rais'd it up; So the Tears of true Repentance ſerve to extinguiſh thoſe flames and terrors of Conſcience, and to blot out thoſe burning ſins (the iſſues of Satans fiery Temptations) which firſt cauſed

cauſed them, by the means of Chriſt's Grace, to run over. Lord! give us in the firſt place thy ſuſtaining Grace, which may preſerve us from the danger of great and ſcandalous offences: But if thy Wiſdom find it otherwiſe requiſite, to puniſh our preſumptions with a temporary deſertion, and by withdrawing thy power to let us be foiled with the aſſault of carnal Temptations; yet never deny us that Reſtoring Grace, which may re-eſtabliſh us in thy favour. Give us, if not the Grace of Standing,

ding, yet the Grace of Weeping; that though we cannot be Innocent, we may be Repentant.

F I N I S.